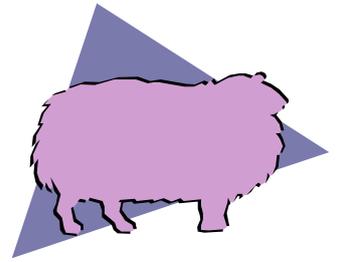
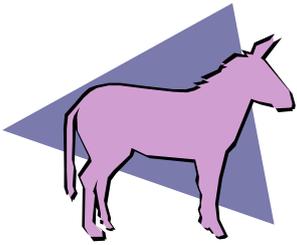


TAM O'SHANTER TIMES

SPRING 2006



Animal Update

Our three breeding ewes have given us four very dark brown lambs, three males and one female. The oldest sheep in our small flock is now living in the field behind the animal houses where we used to keep the poultry. She has the company of our two nanny goats during the daytime. Our three youngest sheep have gone to Hilbre Island for several months.

As usual, at this time of year, we have lent out incubators and eggs to schools. The chicks and ducklings are being brought back to the farm to be reared. Eight chicks and two ducklings were successfully hatched by Brookdale and Cole Street Primary Schools early this month and are presently being housed in the animal house at the farm.

Our breeding sow has been taken to mate with a boar at a farm near Chester. Hopefully there will be more piglets in June. The three piglets we have at present are doing well and have now been moved to a larger field.

The ducks are laying their large cream coloured eggs. The eight rabbits are all fine. Grey-beige Barley and all white Bobtail are the two most popular rabbits with the visitors who stroke them during the Sunday afternoon Pat-a-Pet sessions.



You will see a new building at the bottom end of the farm. This is going to be a new hen house. Hens should be taking up residence shortly.

Farm Staff News

Dawn Holmes the new Community Liaison Officer started her post at the farm at the end of November. She has settled in well and is enjoying her new job immensely. Dawn has been busy co-ordinating the incubation projects and setting up a volunteer monitoring system.

Funding News

Thanks to the Green Machine we have been awarded £1900 for various items to promote nature conservation through education. Look out for new games in the Activity Room, nest box cameras looking at wild nesting birds, information panels on the heath land of Bidston Hill and events looking at bats.

Another award from Community Chest for £2000 will see improvements to the toilet facilities.

Both these grants were gained through the Community Foundation for Merseyside.

We will be seeking large grants in the future to improve the café, office and information / sales counter. Plans are being drawn up to extend and improve the layout of the building but this will require substantial funding. Watch this space.

Training

From the beginning of March we have been hosting a 10-week horticultural course with Acacia Horticultural Services Ltd (a social enterprise) and the WEA. Using the workshop and polytunnel the course is focusing on container gardening.

Two members of staff have been on training to improve educational visits. The Access to Farms, Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme was subsidised by the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, of which we are a member.

Thanks to:

The Oxtan Society for funding the new poultry house.

Mrs Longworth for providing 2 picnic tables in memory of her husband George

Wanted

Small fridge – any condition as long as it works!
Can collect



Volunteers

Congratulations and well done to the eleven volunteers from the farm that have recently qualified for the Wirral CVS 100 Hour Certificate Scheme. They were as follows:- Ted Hill, Robin Shields, Robin Hughes, Mathew Flynn, Jonathan Dodd, Sue Arnold, Jim Hough, Francis Bartley Jane Rumsey, Daniel Hull and Yasmin Hashim.

Easter Events



The Wirral Herpetological Society will be returning to the farm on April 12th bringing with them a large variety of snakes, reptiles, spiders and invertebrates.

Easter Monday 1 - 3 pm

Further Easter time activities will include egg decorating, mask making and egg games. A small charge will be payable for each activity.

Members

Please remember that **subscriptions** are due on the 1st April. Please make cheques payable to: **Wirral Urban Farm Association**. Recent subscriptions (i.e. since October 1st 2005) will last until 2007. We maintain very low rates (£2 /individual/year) to merely cover cost of mailing newsletters. We do appreciate donations either through the box on the wall in the Animal House or with your subscription.

Friends of the Farm is the working name of the Wirral Urban Farm Association
Charity No. 515789 based at
Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm
Boundary Road
Bidston, Wirral
CH43 7PD
Tel: 0151 653 9332 Fax 0151 652 4236

Bidston Hill

A £19,000 grant from 'Living Spaces' to the Friends of Bidston Hill has enabled various improvement works to be done over the winter including a Heritage Trail, production of a booklet about the trees on Bidston Hill and one on the Rhododendrons, new picnic tables, direction finder (to be installed soon), opening up of the views, re surfacing some paths and tree planting. Look out for the three new colour booklets available from the farm at the souvenir counter or Ranger's office. Priced at 50p each they are a bargain!

Work is also being done on the roof of the windmill. The oak cladding on the roof was beginning to perish and is being replaced by Wirral Borough Council, who own the Grade 2* listed building. Work should be completed in April. The Friends of Bidston Hill are looking at funding opportunities to improve the windmill for use by visitors including school groups.



Events



FRIDAY APRIL 28TH BAT WALK

Join the Bidston Hill Ranger at Tam O'Shanter for a fascinating insight into the world of the only flying mammal. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** – limited places only, which get booked up very quickly. **You are advised to 'phone 653 9332 to book your place NOW!!**

SATURDAY 13TH MAY 2.30 pm RHODODENDRON AND TREE WALK

Join Morna Knottenbelt, an acknowledged rhododendron expert, and Nic Harding, the Ranger, for a leisurely stroll and find out more about our important collection of rhododendrons and trees.

No booking needed. Wear stout shoes and outdoor clothes. **Meet at THE WINDMILL at 2.30 pm**

Amendment to constitution

In order to comply with charity legislation and reduce administration costs, notice is hereby given to all members of the following proposed amendment to the constitution of the Wirral Urban Farm Association Reg. Charity No. 515789. Within paragraph 'C' of the 'Finance' Section the constitution currently states:-

At the end of the financial year, accounts shall be prepared audited and submitted to members attending the Annual General Meeting.

It is proposed to change this to:-

At the end of the financial year, accounts will be subject to an annual review in accordance with prevailing charity legislation.

The proposal will be made at the meeting on May 17th 2006 at 7.30 pm at Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm.